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Neglected Arabia



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A NATIVE FERRY BOAT ON THE TIGRIS

NEGLECTED ARABIA

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Neglected Arabia

Missionary News and Letters

Published Quarterly by

THE ARABIAN MISSION



MRS. CANTINE



DR. CANTINE

Dr. and Mrs. James Cantine have been home on furlough since last May. The former has been twenty-five years, the latter fourteen years, in the service of the Arabian Mission. The presence in this country of Dr. Cantine and several other missionaries from Arabia, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Mission, and the pressing financial needs of the Mission made a special campaign in its behalf both timely and imperative. Dr. Zwerner, who, with Dr. Cantine, founded the Mission, was called home from Cairo to assist therein.

Besides his service in the Arabian campaign, Dr. Cantine has been speaking quite widely through our churches and representing the denomination at the Laymen's Missionary Movement Conventions. By action of the Board of Foreign Missions taken in anticipation of Dr. Chamberlain's extended absence from the country while visiting our mission stations, Dr. Cantine was appointed Acting Foreign Secretary of the Board, which position he has held since last September.

Recruits Wanted—Who Shows the White Feather?

REV. DIRK DYKSTRA

NOTE BY EDITOR: This article, written nearly a year ago, was withheld from publication as its appeal for recruits was felt by the Trustees to be untimely, for the Mission then was many thousands of dollars in debt. It was not thought to be good policy to plan advance in expenses while the finances of the Mission were so seriously in arrears. During this year, however, the Arabian Campaign, by the \$25,000 raised, has changed the deficit to a small surplus. At the last meeting of the Mission the resolutions of the year before were reiterated. It is to be noted that during the year only one missionary has been added to the force, Miss Charlotte B. Kellien, former private secretary to Dr. Zwemer, who late in the autumn began her work of language study at Busrah. The entrance of Great Britain into this region of our Mission will doubtless open new opportunities of service for which we should be prepared.

A few days ago it was my privilege to visit one of the fields of carnage of the far flung battle line of the present world-wide conflict. This particular battle field lies twenty miles south of Busrah and the action fought there between the British and the Turks with ten or twelve thousand men on either side was sufficiently severe to leave hundreds of dead bodies to mingle with the desert sand. It was sadly interesting to notice how the temporary trenches of the attacking British were hurriedly dug in front of and on the flank, of the Turkish trenches, and how the latter are interrupted every few hundred feet by large mounds where those lie buried who would rather lose their lives than leave their post. The line of flight of the retreating Turkish troops was still clearly visible, and here also as far as the eye could see were these newly made mounds whose silence was eloquent of the love of country found in every human heart.

And yet what is this battlefield of ten square miles by the side of those larger scenes of action reaching from China in the east to Belgium on the west. The thought is overwhelming that for love of their country and their country's ideals millions of men are ready to sacrifice their lives and their means. For months, and if necessary for years, men will fall by thousands while others come to take their places, and there will be no slackening or retreat till the hard fought fight is won.

It is almost superfluous to state that if so much is sacrificed for the sake of earthly kingdoms, much more ought to be sacrificed, and with greater eagerness, for the advancement of the heavenly kingdom. And yet how indifferently this fight is being carried on. Only a

handful of missionaries are to hold a battle line that encircles the globe. In some cases hundreds of miles intervene between the sentries of Christianity, while some of the more strategic places are only weakly held. The attempts of the Teutonic allies to win over the Moslem world to its side show only too well the strategic importance of this solid mass of humanity. Had their plan succeeded and a Jihad or Holy War had been declared, it would have gone hard with Christian people all over the world. It is this mass of humanity that Missions to Moslems face, and it has been assigned to the Arabian Mission of the R. C. A. to take and to hold one of the most strategic points of the stronghold of Islam. For twenty-five years we have been fighting with an insufficient force. When will the necessary reinforcements come? The armies of the present war are constantly said to contain such and such a number of "effectives," men able to take the firing line. How many effectives has our army in Arabia? If we consider that on account of the difficult climate in which our campaign is being carried on, fully one-fifth of our force must be at home on furlough, there can be at the most only a score of effectives to distribute on our front of a thousand miles. Will anyone dare to say that this is an adequate force? The Arabian Mission does not think so, and therefore has laid the following conservative request for reinforcements before the Board of Trustees:

"Be it resolved:

"(1) That the Board of Trustees be asked to do their utmost to secure for the immediate needs of the work in Arabia a doctor, a clergyman, and two Zenana workers, married or single; *these to take the place of workers recently lost and to meet very pressing needs.*

"(2) That besides these the Board of Trustees be asked to secure a second clergyman as soon as possible to enable the Mission to continue the work in Mesopotamia, where the need under changed conditions is already pressing and will soon become simply overwhelming.

"(3) That the Board be asked to use their utmost efforts to secure also a second doctor, so that the open doors into the interior of Arabia may be entered. The prayers of many years, indeed the very purpose of the Mission, seems ready for fulfilment, but open doors mean little if there is no one to enter."

Lord Kitchener holds in his hand no greater service than is here held up to the vision of those who are willing to see. The changes that this war will bring about will undoubtedly lead to an opening of the minds and hearts of the Moslems living in this section of Arabia. The Persian Gulf is one of the storm centers of the present war. Busrah in the north and Maskat in the south have both been the scenes of terrible slaughter, and at present there is fighting in progress in Persia toward the east and in central Arabia toward the west. And this partaking in international politics cannot but lead to the breaking down of the barriers of self satisfaction and bigotry.

So the call for volunteers has gone forth. The recruiting office at 25 East 22d Street is ready to receive the names.

The story is told that in some parts of England young women go about with white feathers, which they pin on every able bodied man of military age who has not yet joined the army. Who among the able bodied and able minded young men and women in the Reformed Church is willing to receive the doubtful honor of being decorated with the white feather? From my experience among them for the last two years I am ready to say that there are none. In fact, they have offered themselves to the recruiting officer and he has had to tell them, "I cannot take you now, as there is no money for supplies and equipment." Who is showing the white feather, the young men and women who stay at home because there is no money to send them, or the churches and the individuals who do not supply their share of the money necessary to send and equip the recruits? No Britisher has ever grudged the government the millions needed for the building of the effective fleet. And shall we not open hearts and hands to give ourselves and all we have so that reinforcements in abundance can be sent at once to those hard pressed on the far flung battle line.

To-day I told my boys in the school in Kuwait that I was to have some cheap benches made for the school as there was no money for good ones. One of them spoke up and said, "Why, you have lots of money in your Mission. Whenever one of our people in America dies he bequeathes one-third of his possessions to the Mission." Would it were true, and that it were given freely before the hand of death wrenched it from us.

One of the Least of These—His Sisters

MRS. ELEANOR TAYLOR CALVERLEY, M.D.

One day a well-to-do Arab of Kuwait sent for me to make a professional call on his sick wife. She was one of two wives for whom the man had to provide separate houses, because of the hatred the two women bore to each other. I found the patient lying on a mattress spread on the floor, feverish, sad and discouraged. There seemed to be no reason for her fever. Her ten-day-old son was a lusty little fellow, and the mother seemed to have nothing radical the matter with her. We had been friends for some time, and it did not take Fatima long to tell me the real cause of her illness. She had been taken away from her home in Yemen, hundreds of miles from Kuwait, a pretty girl of twelve or thirteen, and sold to her husband in Kuwait. At first his admiration and favor had made her happy, but the hatred of her partner wife soon took away the joy from her marriage. When she was ill, and unable to amuse her husband, he stayed away from her house and showered all his attentions on the other wife. The little sick woman, a frail, gentle creature, lay on her mattress in her gloomy room thinking of her happy childhood in her pleasant home in Yemen. She longed for her mother and father, her brothers and sisters. She might not hope ever

to see them again. There was no one to love her in this lonely spot. Her husband did not love her as she loved him. She had given him her whole life, but now in her need of sympathy she found him forgetful of her. And so she lay and grieved and sighed and suffered, poor, pretty little mother, until the neighbors thought her condition serious.

As I took my leave from the patient I was met outside her door by the husband, bland, smiling, apparently solicitous as to the welfare of his wife. What was my diagnosis? What remedies would I suggest? He looked at me in surprise when I told him the cause of the trouble, as plainly as I could, and laughed when I exclaimed, "Thank God, I am not a Moslem woman!"



MRS. CALVERLY AND HER TWO CHILDREN

Perhaps you will say "We have sadder cases than that in our own country." Yes, that is true. But the difference is this. In our country a man cannot have two wives without being punished for it by the law. With us it is not even a question of religion only. The law itself requires that a man consider the rights and feelings of his wife. In Arabia neither law nor religion troubles itself with such unimportant subjects as these.

The man of whom I have just told you was perhaps the best, most moral Moslem I know. His conduct is exemplary, according to Moslem standards. He had only two wives, whereas his religion allowed him four. He did not beat his wife; he had a right to do so, for she was his property, just as was his horse. He might have divorced her with a word because she was discontented. He continued to provide her shelter, food and raiment. He even called in a doctor when she was sick; few Moslems would do that. He represents the best which Islam has to offer to women. His wife was fortunate among Arab women.

American women—what have you been doing to-day? Think over the details of your happy and interesting life. Think of your pleasant, comfortable home, and compare it with the gloomy, barren room in which that woman—a fortunate woman for a Moslem—lay. See your table strewn with books and magazines. She had not a book and could not have read a word had she possessed a book. Moslem women are not considered worth educating.

Remember how your family gathered around the breakfast table. Your husband sat at one end and you at the other, while the bright faces and lively conversation of your children filled your cup of happiness to overflowing. That Moslem woman has never known such joy. Her husband would not condescend to eat with a woman. She can eat with her daughters and the women servants. If her husband happens to be dining at her house he must be served first and she may eat what is left.

How proud you were of that blooming daughter as she came home from school and told you of her studies, her athletic achievements, her good times with boy and girl friends, her hopes and ambitions! That Arab woman has a daughter, too, a timid little girl not yet old enough to be required by Moslem custom to wear the veil. No school life will she have, no athletic games, no companionship with youths and maids of her own age. She will seldom, if ever, be allowed to leave the four walls of her house. She will be expected to sit beside her mother and drink coffee and smoke cigarettes, perhaps, while listening to the gossip of neighbor women about the latest birth, marriage, divorce, death—or, even more interesting, the latest scandal. She will learn to listen unblushingly to conversation not fit for any ears; but, should a strange man enter her courtyard, quick as lightning she will draw her black cloak over her face. Her plans, her ambitions—what will they be? If you ask her she will tell you that her ambition is to do what her parents think best for her. If you win her confidence she will whisper to you the yearnings of her heart. A lover she dreams of—a handsome young knight who will make her his first and only wife—and who will cherish her even when her youth has passed. Yes, believe me, that is the fondest dream of the Arab maiden's heart. In reality her husband is more than likely to be an old and dissipated man who has had many wives and will have many more. She will be sold to the highest bidder, to a first cousin preferably. She will have no voice in the matter—and will never meet the bridegroom until after the wedding ceremony has been performed.

Christian women, thank God that you were not born to the lot of Moslem women! May our thankfulness not content itself with mere words of gratitude. You and I can bring to our Moslem sisters the abundant life which Christ brought to us.

Our Foothold in Arabia

MISS A. E. FARRER, SCOTCH MISSION, SHEIKH OTHMAN

"There is probably no place on the whole surface of the habitable globe more utterly arid and dreary to the eye than Aden." Thus said Keith-Falconer more than thirty years ago. Yet in this uninviting spot he began what he hoped would be his life-work, and his memory has since been kept fragrant by the few workers sent out here under the United Free Church of Scotland, while his name is now perpetuated by the hospital in Sheikh Othman, ten miles inland from Aden.

The voyage from England to Aden takes twelve days; from there we may be driven in a camel *gharri*, or in the more modern motor car to our mission bungalow. Here is nothing luxurious, but we are thankful for the few palm trees, and for the bright little birds who cheerily sing us a welcome.



VIEW FROM HOSPITAL AT SHEIKH OTHMAN

Our day begins early, for at five o'clock we are astir, ready to enjoy the ever glorious Eastern dawn. By 6.30, after the orders for the day have been given, and our simple home set straight, a start is made in our shaky *gharri* for the hospital. In a few minutes we come to the *suk* or market. Here are to be seen hundreds of camels resting after their long journey from the interior, laden with skins, green food, dates, grain, wood, coffee, etc. The Arabs who have brought them lie about anywhere, some asleep on native string couches, some lazily feeding the camels, many lying on the ground. Their dress consists of a long strip of material wound round their loins, the rest of their body being well greased with cocoanut or olive oil.

Their long, curly hair is tied back usually with cord. Farther along sit many low caste women making ropes for reins, or pads for the sores of the camels. Goats are everywhere, picking up anything from paper to bread. They are real scavengers, yet supply all the milk drunk by the natives.

On the right are many rough coffee stalls, all very dirty. Little girls and boys run about selling their flat, red, unleavened cakes, which are usually warm. There is such a lot to tell of these dear little children who collect at a corner to get a smile from the hospital *Sittat*. Now, however, we must leave them and turn down a side street of mud houses. Here women peep from behind dirty sacking hung as a door. Little naked children run out to shout their good-mornings. Never shall I forget this picture, and the terrible feeling of hopelessness I had on the first morning of my arrival. I had been told to think of the dirtiest place I had ever seen and consider it clean that this might not be a shock.



ARAB TOMB AT SHEIKH OTHMAN

But here is the hospital at last. On the ground-floor lie dozens of poor, dirty, half-starved, sick people, many blind or with diseased eyes, many lame with bad ulcers or with majura foot (a disease of Arabia), little tubercular children, hungry-looking Somalis, whose skins remind one of a bright kitchen range, beds all round the low balcony, altogether too dreadful a sight to describe; away under the trees are a few lepers who have come from the hills. I walk round the next two floors, and for a while my heart sinks lower and lower. But what a need for earnest workers, and have I not every confidence that God has called me to this spot, and have not others worked with little trained assistance for years? Yes! surely there is work to be done, and as we meet downstairs, a small band of Christians, to pray for a blessing on our own day's work and that of others, a great longing that I may be worthy fills me.

It is now 7.45 A.M. One doctor goes upstairs, whilst the other takes the service for out-patients downstairs, so that everyone may hear of Christ's love. You would be interested in one of these congregations. (One day I counted over 200 listeners.) Amongst the men in front of us are Jews dressed in long white garments, with the red *tarboosh* for headgear, a few Arabs of the wealthier class dressed in tussore, having adopted the European style of dress, many straight, black Somalis whom most people dislike because of their capacity for lying and stealing, and their proud spirit even when penniless; these are dressed in yards and yards of white calico, and they carry a huge stick; but mostly the gathering consists of dirty, almost nude Arabs, many having come with the camels we saw in the market. Patients are often brought from five to forty days' journey, and these are mostly our in-patients, for many of them need immediate operations to relieve them.

A few women sitting apart truly demand our sympathy. I long to do more for them. Their lives are sad in the extreme, and only as a last resource have they brought their children to the hospital. The poor little mites, whining in their weariness and pain, make one yearn to be able to teach mothers how to care for them.

After the little service is over we all set to work, and find the day often far too short to get in all we hoped to do. There are dressings to prepare, wounds to see to, instruments to keep in order, much sterilizing to be done, not to mention the endless cleaning and mending of hospital garments, and making of all sorts of things. But it is great work. The operations are mostly done on Tuesday and Thursday in each week. They are much the same as those in a home hospital, but some are made much more difficult as a result of the cautery, or of rough surgery done unsuccessfully before they have come to the Scots doctors. For example, if a patient had pain in his head, the cure might be hot irons applied to his foot. Then there are some troubles caused by their religious ideas. Some have fearful wounds because of family feuds. I remember so well one Friday six people were brought to us wounded. A family feast had been given, rose water had been passed round to wash the guests' fingers (one of their customs, for they eat with their fingers), when the youngest got up and cut off his "brother's"* left hand, the skin of his forehead, and almost severed his nose. Another of the company was stabbed in the back, another in the side, another had a bullet right through his leg. We kept four of the patients in hospital, and before they left us, healed, I did my best to tell them of Christ's teaching about forgiveness. It took them some time to see, but they did understand, and I hope they still remember.

The little boys love to come to my balcony, and have biscuits and tea with me. They used to be frightened of my food, but now they know me, and certainly like to eat even cake.

* Probably "cousin's." Certain degrees of relationship are included in the term "brother."

When there is time I visit the women in the mud huts on the way from hospital. Poor souls! I wonder when we shall have sufficient workers to teach them and their children. The mothers are often called "cows," and truly they have little more intelligence. Their outlook is indeed narrow. The better-class women often live in the upper part of the house with only a slit in the wall to show them the world beneath. The child mothers, of whom we see little, take everything as a matter of course. When a child is born, its eyes are rubbed with *kohil*, its little dark face colored with yellow powder, patterns marked on its hands and toes, its head plastered with mud and oil, and a few charms to keep away *ginns* (evil spirits) are hung on various parts of its body. The climate being so hot, few clothes are necessary, and the child simply lies in a corner of the mother's garment.

Boys are much more thought of than girls, but the latter are valuable because the father is willing to marry them to the men who can give most for them. It is strange to hear even little children say "Min Allah"—"It is from God." A little girl of three one Sunday climbed where Miss Miller had forbidden her to go. The result was a broken leg, but when picked up she brightly said, "Min Allah."

When a man shoots another he says, "Min Allah," for he thinks God has delivered his enemy into his hands. If a man steals he thinks just the same. In this way one begins to realize something of the fatalism of the Arab mind, and its utter lack of any sense of personal responsibility.

Is it all worth while? Ian Keith Falconer's bright, brief life; Dr. Young's twenty-three years of strenuous lonely toil, lightened in the past seven years by the help of his colleague, Dr. MacRae, and the nurses, one of whom now rests in God's Acre there by the sea.

Surely it is! This "arid spot" is the gateway to Arabia, the cradle of Islam, so long closed to the gospel of love. In the bright day that is dawning for the world this country, too, must have a share; and those who are working at Sheikh Othman are looking and longing for the time when the Gateway will be swung wide open, and, reinforced by other laborers, they shall go forward bearing the light which, one day, will illumine every corner of that dark land.

—*The Women's Missionary Magazine, United Church of Scotland.*

Annual Report of Men's Medical Department, Kuwait

C. STANLEY G. MYLREA, Physician in Charge

After some five years of pioneer work, done in a native house in the native quarter of the town, medical work in Kuwait entered the second phase in its history when the new and modern hospital was opened last November. The first in-patient was admitted on November 9th, and the first dispensary was held on November 25th. Sheikh Mubarek was good enough to inspect the hospital on January 27th

and expressed his admiration of all that he saw, although he admitted that the making of wounds was more in his line than the healing of them. In my office he asked what the microscope was for so I showed him a flea highly magnified, which perhaps persuaded him more effectively as to the possibilities of the microscope than any amount of talking would have done. He has never forgotten that flea, and people come out to the hospital asking to see the flea that entertained Sheikh Mubarek.



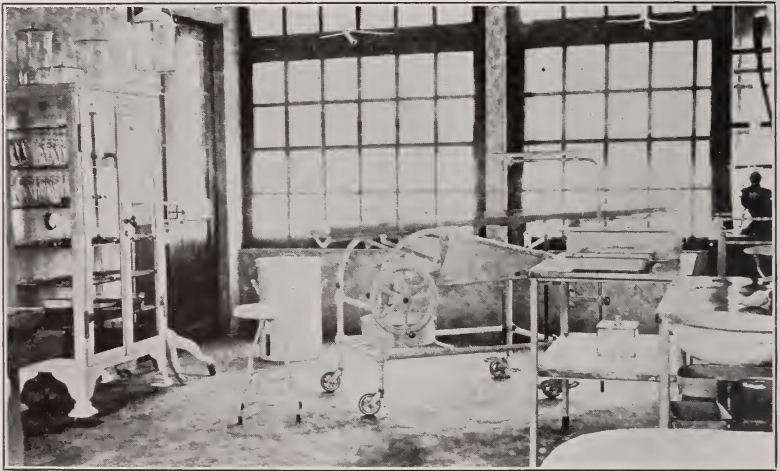
DR. MYLREA

On February 2nd, only a few days after the Sheikh's visit we were privileged to show Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy of India, round our hospital—this visit has already been described in detail in "Neglected Arabia," so I will not dwell further on the matter except to say that I believe that we have in Lord Hardinge a firm supporter of Medical Missions. His gift to the hospital of three hundred rupees I propose to spend on a few articles of furniture for the operating room, amongst other things a clock and a lamp. Early in the year, Seyyid Rejb, the Nekib of Busrah, visited our hospital, and on January 20th gave us the pleasure of his company at lunch—he has been a frequent caller at our house and has shown the same sympathy with our hospital work here as he does at Busrah.

We had one more state visit when on July 23rd Sheikh Mubarek brought Sheikh Khazal out to see us. On this occasion the Sheikhs came into our house and accepted refreshments, staying half an hour. This, so far as I know, was the first time that Sheikh Mubarek has entered the house of a missionary.

I only mention these visits by way of a pleasing contrast between the standing of the Mission in Kuwait to-day and its standing a few years ago. All honor to those who did the pioneer work. Comparing this year's work with last there is a slight increase in the number of in-patients—58 as against 52—the average stay in hospital was the same this year as last, viz., 16 days. The 58 were made up as follows: Surgical 37, medical 10, eye 11. These patients spent, in all, 933 days with us. We could have taken in more patients, but lack of accommodation has forced us to turn people away in the cooler weather when the verandah afforded insufficient protection. In this connection it gives me great pleasure to say that Lieut.-Colonel W. G. Grey has bound himself to raise Rs.1000/ for the erection of two additional rooms, which will be put up as soon as possible. This act of kindness on the part of Colonel Grey is the last link in a long chain of gifts to our work in Kuwait this year not only in money but also in deep sympathy and association with all that we are trying to do. Among our in-patients this year we have not only had the

poor and needy, but the upper classes are beginning to enter our wards. Examples of this are Sheikh Naer, the son of Sheikh Mubarek, and a prominent member of the Khamiss family here. The number of visits this year is 177 as against 95 last year—39 of the 177 were made by one of the assistants acting under my directions. In about 90 of these visits we took a fee, the remainder were made without charge. I mention this latter fact because there seems to be an impression about that missionary doctors never make a visit unless they get paid for it. With reference to this branch of the medical work in Kuwait, something should be said about the need for some means of conveyance. Distances in Kuwait are great and the time consumed in going to a house between two and three miles away is a consideration on busy days. There are no carriages or bellums here as in Busrah, and for some reason it is not considered the thing to ride a donkey in Kuwait. With the exception of the Sheikh everyone walks everywhere. Besides the time consumed there is also the matter of physical fatigue, which cannot be left out of the account. In fact, it seems to me that long distance visits will be more or less out of the question for any lady doctor who may be appointed to Kuwait.



OPERATING ROOM IN NEW HOSPITAL AT KUWAIT

Fees and dispensary receipts this year brought in Rs.1625/13/6; of this total Rs.115/ were contributed from the Women's Side, making the net increase on the Men's Side over last year nearly Rs.700. The number of dispensary treatments is smaller than last year by 1896—this is, I think, merely due to the lean attendance during the days when our hospital was first opened, before people had time to find out where we had moved to. In the month of November we saw very few people. However, everything is going steadily now and there is no lack of work. All classes of the community have

come to the dispensary, from the Sheikh's family to the wandering Bedouin. The actual figures for dispensary attendance are: New cases, 2,387; old cases, 4,287; total treatments, 6,674.

Surgical operations this year numbered 165, exclusive of teeth extractions. Chloroform was administered 25 times and Novocaine 51 times. It has been a great pleasure to use the new operating room, with its complete outfit of appliances and instruments.



HOSPITAL AT KUWEIT PRACTICALLY COMPLETED

The evangelistic work has been carried on along the same general lines as last year, viz., dispensary services conducted by myself or one of the colporteurs, with personal work among the patients by the colporteurs after the service. It is also the colporteur's business to see that there is always a table set out with Scriptures and portions upon it. Unfortunately, our hospital lacks a waiting room, and the verandah has to serve in that capacity. A verandah, on account of its lack of privacy, is not the most suitable place for dispensary services, especially since the Kuwait Hospital is only some twenty feet from the road, and only separated from that road by an open wire fence. Then in the winter the verandah is often cold and wet—I hope that the day is not far distant when we shall have a proper waiting room. I am not able to give the exact figures as to attendance at the dispensary services, but about half the number treated is a fair estimate. We have been lucky this year in having an excellent colporteur for hospital work. Ever since Michael came in April we have put him on especially to hospital evangelistic work and he has spent his mornings at the hospital talking and reading with patients as opportunity offered. Personally I think that this kind of

work, with the right kind of man to do it, is of far more value than the dispensary service. Michael has made something like two-thirds of his total Scripture sales in the hospital, and moreover, by this method, the late comers do not escape personal contact with the gospel. I would suggest that all of our hospitals have a colporteur regularly attached to the hospital during dispensary hours, if suitable men can be found. There are no tours to report from Kuwait this year, but I received a very pleasant visit one day from a man whom I knew in Shargah some eight years ago—Sheikh Ahmed—nephew of Abd-el-Latif, the British Political Agent in Shargah. He assured me most positively of a welcome if ever I should come to either Shargah or Dubai, in spite of the strong anti-foreign feeling prevailing there, which latter fact he acknowledged. He left me his full postal address and said he hoped I would write him if I felt able to accept his hospitality. He spent at least an hour with me, thoroughly examining everything, and expressed the wish that Dubai could share Kuwait's advantages. In connection with the subject of touring, the Mission will be interested to know that I was able in October to visit Doha, the principal town of Katar, and to meet Sheikh Abdallah there and his son Ali. I do not think that Doha is ready yet to receive a missionary, but if we have patience there will probably be a welcome there for us before many years are past. It is doubtful if the place will ever be worth occupation by a regular missionary force. It is of no particular strategic importance from any point of view, and being only twenty-four hours sail from Bahrein, medical advice is not altogether out of the reach of its inhabitants.

Sowing and Reaping

MRS. MINNIE W. DYKSTRA

It was interesting and encouraging to be told on our first Sunday in Bahrein after our return, "Be sure you go to church in time if you wish to have a seat," and the well filled church certainly was a cheering sight. This attendance has kept up well until the present diving season, which employs about three thousand men, who are at sea for several months at a time, and among them are those who attend our church. The attendance of the women has, however, remained the same.

Last spring the missionaries in Bahrein organized the Sunday School on the plan of the Sunday Schools at home. Two classes were organized for women, one for Christians and the other for Moslems. Then there is one class for boys, one for girls, a men's adult Bible class for the Christians, and a class for Moslem men who happen to be present at the church services. The attendance at the two all-Moslem classes naturally varies, but there are always some present.

At our communion service in April we had the blessed privilege of seeing three individuals confess Christ and unite themselves with His body, the Church. These three represented three faiths, Islam,

Catholicism, and Protestant Christianity. The representative from Islam was the woman convert of four years ago who fell away into sin and because of her life was placed under censure. God has now graciously brought her back and her admission on this day was a reinstatement into the community of believers, a rededication of her life to the Saviour whom she has grieved so deeply and whom she loves so dearly. The convert from Catholicism had lived under Christian influence for some years, but more so during the last year. In January this girl's grandfather, a man of four score years and more, a nominal Catholic, was led on his death-bed to accept the Saviour, and died rejoicing in Christ. The third to unite with the church is the eleven-year-old daughter of a Christian family in Bahrein. Her parents are of Syrian and Armenian origin, who suffered much in the massacres and persecutions that have taken place in their country. The faithful, earnest Christian instruction which is the foundation in this home has brought forth its fruit. Of those privileged to witness this beautiful service no one can readily forget the picture. On the one hand it was a picture of the three stages of the history of the Christian church, first its purity, then false doctrines corrupting and despoiling, thus opening the door for a still greater deviation from the truth in this false faith. On the other hand it illustrated the fact that there are coming into the Kingdom redeemed ones from the darkness of Mohammedanism, from the twilight of Catholicism, as well as from the full light of the Christian home.

The Zenana work also is showing results. Formerly the missionary asked for the privilege to read the Word, or threw out bait to draw from the hostess a request to do so. Now conditions are generally reversed. In many houses the request to read is altogether voluntary, and there have been visits made by special request for the sole purpose of reading the Word. The women's weekly prayer meeting has been well attended, and it has been a matter of special encouragement to have the more bigoted Shiah women come to these meetings. Our evangelistic work has no drawing card nor a favor to bestow upon those that come as the medical work has, therefore the desire to meet with us must be based on something a little higher than selfish gain. These Shiahs often let us feel that it is not very pleasant for them to have to sit down with Sunnis, but still they come and seem to like it. These two Mohammedan sects are far separated and at times they are bitter enemies, but the cross will break down the middle wall of partition here also. Usually there are after meetings on these Tuesdays. Such meetings are not what they would be at home, for further inquiry or to confess Christ. Usually it is to hear more singing, or if a large crowd comes in late, the message of the afternoon is repeated, and generally all of the first audience remain for the second talk. It is usually the missionaries who suggest leaving before the meetings are closed. This proves at least three things, namely, these women are glad to meet with the Christians, these prayer meetings fill some need in the lives of these women, and more and more these women break out of this imprisonment to satisfy this need and craving.

Three instances have occurred in Bahrein this spring which have greatly strengthened our own hope and faith in the power of God to quicken into life those that are dead. The first case was that of a young woman in-patient in the hospital. From the very first day she was eager to listen to any reading or explanation, and this eagerness grew apace with the disease from which she was suffering. The last two days she was with us she prayed in Jesus' name for light and guidance. It was at the suggestion and the encouragement of the Christian messenger, it is true, but there was a childlike simplicity in her faith and acquiescence that gave hope for true life. The last Sunday that she was with us the Moslem Women's Class met in the ward with the patients, and Fatima drank in every word, she was so hungry for the least message. She thanked us all for meeting there with her. On the following morning she was worse, and the relatives, fearing the end was near, removed her to the house. They feared the consequences of her dying surrounded by Christian influences, and were anxious to perform their own ceremonies upon her dying or dead. About an hour after she arrived at her house she died, leaving us the sweet hope that the Light had led her Home.

Another incident proved that the darkest heart can be lightened and the simplest mind can receive understanding. A Bedouin woman, who was caring for a sick son in the hospital, was a very regular and earnest attendant upon all our meetings. She was very much interested from the beginning, but frankly admitted that she understood nothing of all she had heard, that she did not know who Jesus was or what we meant by the cross. But each day she would follow us about and finally she said, "I do not know anything at all, my heart is just like this (locking her hands tightly), but I want to know. All of you seem to know so much that makes you so certain and so happy, why cannot I have it too? My heart seems to be like a stone." Slowly, patiently, she was taught in the very simplest way and for her there was the promise that the stony heart can be turned to flesh. When the time came for herself and son to leave she cried bitterly. She seemed to have caught some of the truth and to be so hungry for more. She was comforted by the story of the demoniac and Christ's command, "Return to thy house, and declare how great things God hath done for thee," and also by the message that as Jesus increased the bread and fishes, so He would increase her faith and understanding, if only she continued to ask Him and depend on Him alone. She is gone, but surely in her case God's Word shall not return unto Him void, but shall accomplish that for which it was sent into her life.

The third case, even more than the others, is a miracle of God's saving grace working unhelped and unhindered by the crude efforts of his messengers. A mother requested us to come and see her sick daughter. The first visit was sufficient to prove that she was indeed a very sick woman, and since they know so little of caring for those who suffer, the only chance to do anything for her would be under direct care in the hospital. But when this was mentioned the young woman cried out in fear, "Oh, no, never, I am afraid, I know they

will kill me, I would rather die than go there." Then we appealed to the mother and she gave apparent consent, but this renewed the terror and fear in the woman's heart, and she cried out in tears to her mother not to allow it. We sat down then and talked, reasoned and prayed with the patient, who finally consented to come, but she wished it to be at night so that the neighbors could not see her go. We had gained our point and left, promising to come again in a few hours to see about her removal to the hospital. When we returned it was very evident that we were in the presence of some wonderful power that made the humble hut seem holy ground. The evidences of death coming to claim its own were there, although we did not realize how near. But there was more than death, there was an eagerness, a trust, a questioning look on the face of the woman that told of a change in her heart. We had come to tell her that the doctor thought best to wait until early in the morning or the next evening to take her over to the hospital. Immediately she said, "Oh, no, you must take me now, I want to go. I know I was afraid of you, but ever since you left me you have been in my heart. I have thought of you and what you told me. I love you, I trust you." She begged most earnestly to be taken along at once, if only to our house. Caressing us she said, "Oh, I love you. You have something I do not have, and I want it, I want it. I do not know what it is, but I want it and you have it. I cannot stay here, I am going, I must go." Again we soothed her by our prayers and by quoting the promises of Christ. At last she said, "If I cannot go, will you not send M—— to me? She has what I want, she can talk to me." M—— is one of our woman converts. We gladly promised and M—— as gladly went. All night long the dying woman asked for the truth, and all night long M—— talked to her about the Saviour. Several times during the night her mother tried to get her to give the Moslem's dying confession: "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is his apostle," but each time she said, "Do not stop M——, mother, I want to hear more." Towards morning she said, "I am going now, they are calling me, and I cannot stay. Tell the missionaries I love them." And so she died in M——'s arms, not as a Moslem going out into the dark alone, but as a Christian redeemed and brought home, going gladly, a happy smile on her face. Can we, may we doubt the miracle of grace God wrought in that neglected life? And who shall say how many of those who have so long been neglected shall one day like her arise, and with "Arabia's raptured millions sing His love for them?"

As for inquirers there is a woman from a nearby town who heard the Word read by two of the missionaries nearly two years ago, and the message brought new desires into her life. Since then she has come at various times to hear that Word explained, at the hospital prayers, at our Sunday services, and in our prayer meetings. Another has heard, has read for herself, became interested and was imprisoned in stocks. She was charged with a debt, was given a chance to earn or secure her release on condition that she promised to leave alone everything Christian and become a Moslem. She refused and was

beaten while in stocks. At the present writing she has been released from prison but it is not known who secured her release or where she has been taken. Two other women have been receiving instruction for some time, one of whom has asked for baptism. The other has been deceived, persecuted, beaten, threatened, villified, slandered, all without measure. But through it all she has clung to her confession of salvation through Christ, although it has cost her husband, children, houses, land, reputation, ease, affluence.

That Mission work in Moslem lands is one of the most difficult and that this is particularly true of Arabia has been stated so many times that it seems unnecessary to reiterate this fact. But just as the brightest bow is traced upon the darkest cloud so these promises and signs of an awakening are more apparent because of the dark background. The hard and stony field is beginning to show signs of life that tell of the workings of God's Spirit. The efforts, tears, and prayers that have been expended on this part of God's vineyard will some day have their full fruition and who shall say it is not even now the beginning of the harvest? Only let us not imagine that the harvest will be without its cost. Those that have sowed have perhaps often thought how happy those would be who would reap. And no doubt they will be. But it will be a joy mingled with tears and blood and prayers. The converts are not going to come into our churches to confess Christ and they with us to be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease. It will rather be the joy that Christ foretells when he says, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake," and the joy of the apostles when they glorified God because they were counted worthy to suffer for His name. And when God in His own good time shall give us an abundant harvest may we both at home and abroad be prepared to bear the burden of the reaping.

Quackery and Medical Superstition in Arabia

MRS. BESSIE LONDON MYLREA

How many of us protest that we are not superstitious in the very least and yet how often unwilling to acknowledge our feelings even to ourselves, we throw spilt salt over our left shoulders, and knock on wood when we say we have not had a cold this winter. There are people who dare to walk under ladders, but there is always some one ready to remind them of it if anything happens within the next year. It seems difficult even with all our Christianity and civilization to get away from superstitions, so we must have patience with the Arabs when we see some bad results of a sickness due to their superstitions.

In spite of our toleration for their superstitions we cannot help but pity when we see an eye gone or a foot twisted and hear the reasons they give for such misfortune. Some of the superstitions

about disease and its cure are almost laughable, but they are very serious to the Arabs.

Let us begin at the beginning. A new-born baby has its little forehead, eyes and nose blackened with antimony. Around the eyes it is done for medical purposes, but on the forehead and nose it is to keep the evil eye away. The next step is sore eyes, and when the mother is asked how her child's eyes got sore she will tell you that it is "from God" and will protest when you tell her that if she had washed the baby's eyes and kept its little body clean she might have saved it this go of ophthalmia.

Every family seems to have a piece of bright yellow material about as large as a child's handkerchief which is brought out and fastened on the gown of the member who has an acute attack of sore eyes and the eyes are wiped with it. This cloth is a piece of muslin dyed yellow with turmeric. Whether it is ever washed or whether as each one's turn comes round for sore eyes he or she gets a new yellow piece I have not been able to find out, but I must say that the yellow piece of cloth which one usually sees looks as if it had served the family.

Branding with a red hot piece of iron is the cure for every ill, but doctors must know just where to brand. If one has a sore head they brand on the head, or if a swelling is on the neck they might brand at the back of the head just above the neck. If one has something the matter with one's stomach they brand in several places, five or six, all over the abdomen. This branding must be quite painful, but they have such implicit faith in it that they submit stoically. One woman whose eyesight was almost gone as the result of corneal ulcers allowed her very eyeball to be branded several years ago. She now comes to our hospital for treatment and says if she had only known of us before she would never have allowed the native doctors to play with her eye. Not long ago the doctor had jaundice. Every one who heard of it prescribed and assured him that he would get well at once if he followed their instructions. One said he should drink buttermilk with turmeric in it, and others said he should eat a great many water melons and should be branded on the left wrist just above the thumb. One man who called said "The doctor is very bad—I tell him he must be branded, but he won't have it; he must, though, for it will cure him very quickly. He must be branded on the little finger near the nail. If he is not better in two days I will come and bring a man to brand him."

A stray dog took up her abode in the hospital compound and as the watchman is fond of animals he fed her and she very soon felt she had a good home. One day I heard her crying as I was passing through the compound. I found the watchman with a hot piece of iron trying to brand the dog on the nose. When I asked him what he was doing he said, "Khatun, her chest is bad, she coughs, and branding will make her well." However, he found it hard to hold on to her and had to give it up.

Smells seem to influence people who are ill. One day I was visiting in a harem and I heard talk like this:

"Let the Khatun see Fatima's eye."

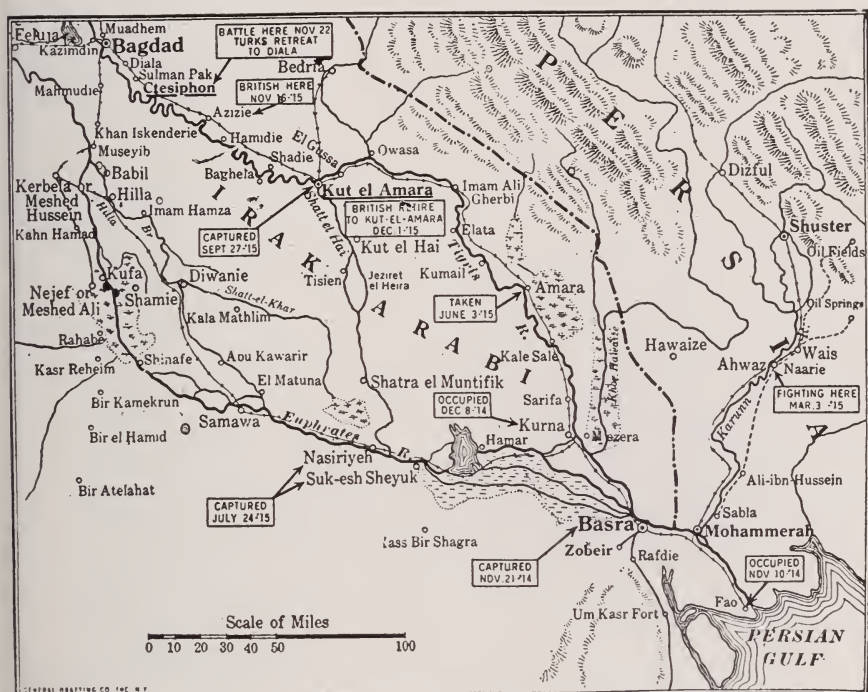
"I don't know whether it will do any good."

"Oh, yes, let her see it."

Finally I asked what was the matter and was told that one of the little girls had a very bad eye, so I said, "Do let me see her." Their first excuse was "She can't come out into the courtyard because the light is too strong." So I offered to go inside, but I noticed that my offer was not accepted. The mother from the doorway said, "I am afraid she smells!" And the women, after sniffing my skirt and sleeves, said, "No, there is no smell, only the smell of soap, we don't think that would hurt the child." However, I never saw that little girl until the attack was over and the sight of that eye was gone.

A woman came to the hospital one day with a badly infected hand. She had a rag made into two plugs stuffed into her nostrils, she removed these plugs while her hand was being dressed. A few days later she told me that she would not be able to come the next morning as it was a big feast day and so many people would be out on the streets that she was afraid the smells would make her hand worse. Her hand was getting on nicely and all the pain had practically gone but one day when she came and I asked her how her hand was she said, "It was beautifully comfortable until yesterday afternoon when a woman who was highly perfumed came to call and at once my hand began to hurt."

It will take more than a lifetime to learn all their cures and superstitions, but these few will give you some idea of the amusing side and also the obstacles and difficulties the medical missionary has to contend with. We rejoice when the people trust themselves to our care, but so often it is after their own remedies and practices have failed and they are in a bad way. One would think that they would soon come to the conclusion, after seeing a perfect recovery, that our way was better, but superstition has a very strong hold in Arabia and we must be patient.



Military Operations North of Busrah

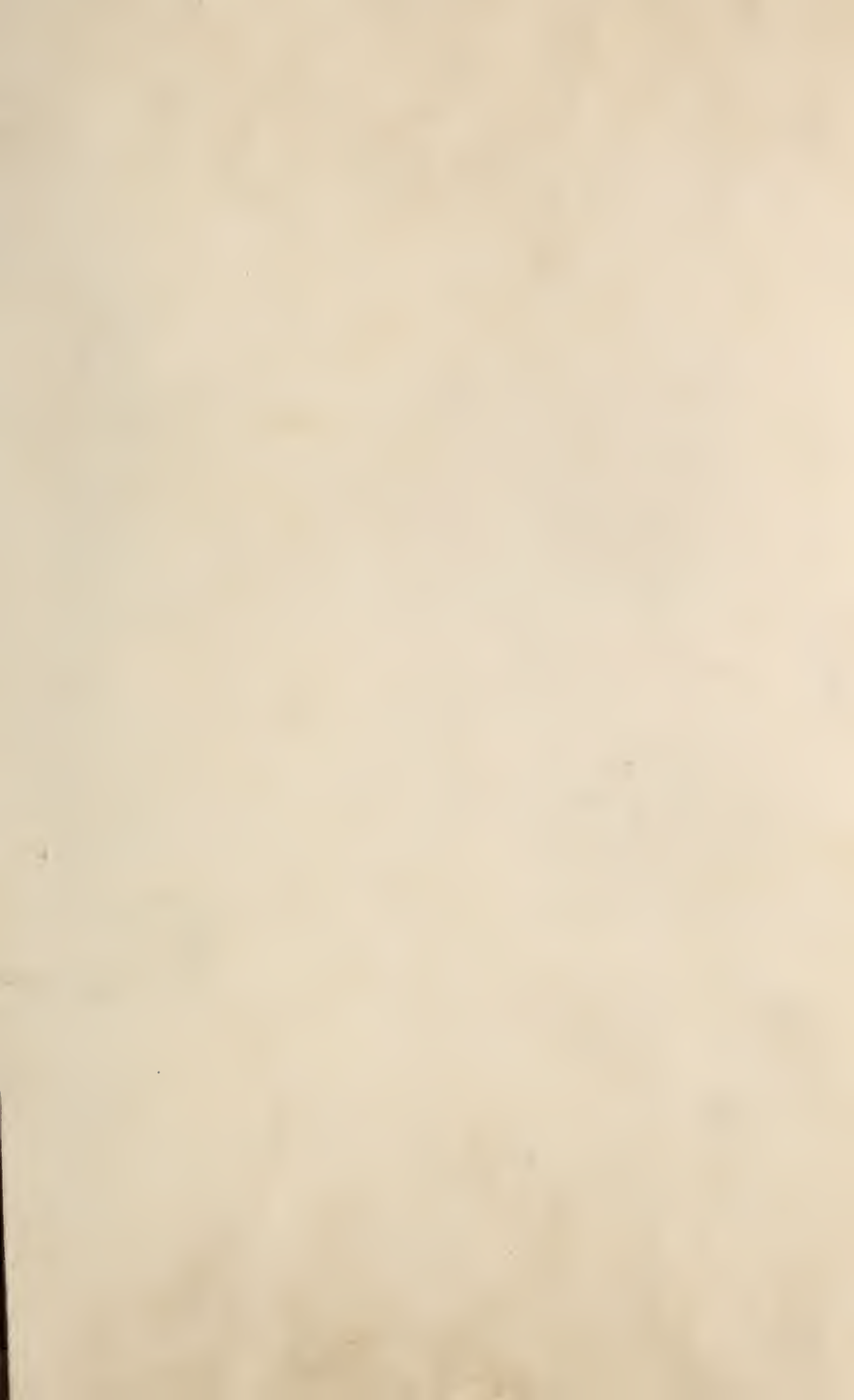
The above map, published some weeks ago in the Literary Digest, sets forth graphically the progress of British conquest in the Mesopotamian Valley during the first year of the war. Since December last the tide of fortune has turned against the British, and although an expedition has been sent to the relief of the original force, which was driven back to Kut-el-Amara, their fate and that of the whole enterprise is still somewhat in doubt. The outcome of this remote part of the war is certain to affect profoundly our missionary work not only at Busrah (spelled Basra on the map) but along the whole western shore of the Persian Gulf.

Call to Sacrifice

Dr. Samuel M. Zwemer

We plough deep furrows and scatter the seed of the Word, hoping for the harvest. But God Himself is waiting for the sowing of the good seed—the children of the Kingdom. “That a furrow be fecund,” said Sabatier, “it must have blood and tears, such as Augustine called the blood of the soul.” The Moslem world must have its Gethsemane and Calvary before it can have its Pentecost. The present condition of that world, therefore, is a supreme call to sacrifice: the sacrifice of our provincialisms or the narrow horizon of our sectarianisms for cosmopolitan statemanship as missionary leaders. We must sink our differences and unite on the essentials. The sacrifice of wealth for investment in schools, the publication of literature, hospitals, and every form of evangelisation, on a scale adequate to meet the new opportunities. There is a call for the sacrifice of life—making it sacred—to force an entrance into the unoccupied mission fields where doors long closed are about to open. “As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.”

“ Out of the realm of the glory light,
Into the far-away land of night;
Out from the bliss of worshipful song,
Into the pain of hatred and wrong;
Out from the holy rapture above,
Into the grief of rejected love;
Out from the life at the Father's side,
Into the death of the crucified;
Out from high honour, and into shame
The Master willingly, gladly came:
And now, since He may not suffer anew,
As the Father sent Him, so sendeth He you ”



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